

Oanbiza



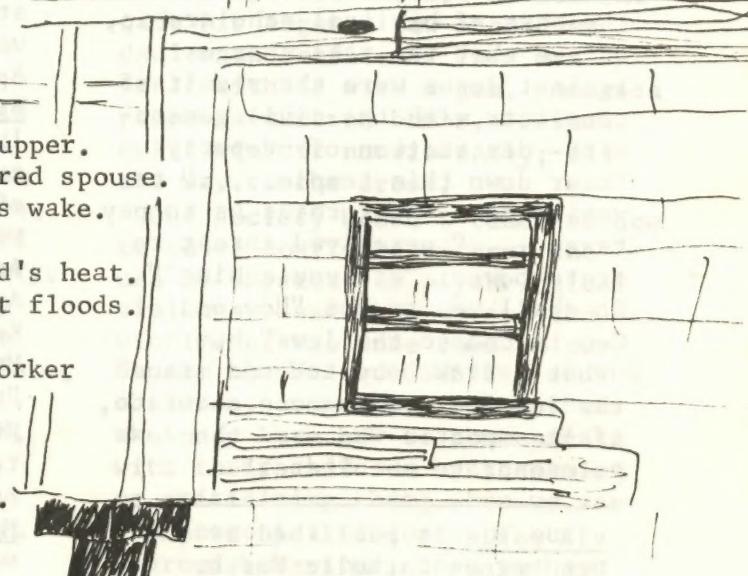
Lent: Meditation on a fire-gutted house
(1517 6th Avenue)
by Joe Da Via

The protective oak umbrellas out
over the snow covered ashes
that were the house next door.

The house is filled with lent.
The dining room ate a poverty supper.
The bedroom screamed of a battered spouse.
The parlor wept at the soldier's wake.
The livingroom froze
at the lack of the slumlord's heat.
The basement drowned in frequent floods.

I am the food granting social worker
the battering spouse
the soul conquering government
the slumlord
and the cruel, inadequate sewer.

I'm tired of being lent.
Easter in me, Lord.
Rebuild me, shelter me
like the protective oak
keep the weather of the world off
and give me hope for tomorrow
that my foundation may support
a shelter of Your peace.



via pacis
(the way of peace)
Des Moines Catholic Worker
Volume 2 number 3
March/April 1978
Easter issue

by John Zeitler

The Jews killed Jesus, and the Romans were the hapless executioners. A literal interpretation of the Gospels of Holy Week do support that thesis. To get beyond this anti-Jewish sentiment we need to consider the historical context of the Gospels. They were written while the early Church was threatened by Roman persecution. Naturally, the writers did not want to proclaim that the state killed Jesus; much safer to blame the powerless Jews.

Reading between the lines with the best of biblical scholarship, we see that the real charges against Jesus were the result of conflicts with the civil government--destruction of property: "tear down this temple...." tax resistance: "he forbids us to pay taxes...." perceived threat to state power: "are you a king?" So shall we say not "How odd of God to choose the Jews" but "What a fluke by Luke to misuse the Jews" or to be more accurate, if less poetic "We used the Jews to exonerate the State."

via pacis is published by the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, Box 4551, Des Moines, Iowa 50306. Tel (515) 243-0765. Subscriptions are free upon request. Community: Frank Cordaro, Joe Da Via, Jacquee Dickey, Betty Goodnough, Edson Howarth, Eve Kavanagh, RSCJ, Ed Polich, John Smith, and John Zeitler.

Discussions

Discussions are held at the House (713 Indiana, one block north of University) every Friday night. Mass begins at 8 p.m., with the discussion following.

March 24: Good Friday; no mass or discussion.

March 31: The Battered Women's Conference; Sr. Eve Kavanagh, RSCJ. Sr. Eve spoke of our ministry as a shelter to battered women at this past winter's conference. She also picked up some information on the current status of justice in family violence.

April 7: The Iowa Family Farm Bill; Bill Smith. Bill is a lobbyist in the state legislature currently pushing for a preservation of family farms in the state. He will also talk of the Carter Administration's farm policies.

April 14: Tax Day, 1978; Rev. Keith Schrag. Keith is a Mennonite minister at Iowa State University. He will talk of his personal (and family) commitment to income tax resistance.

April 21: The Catholic Worker Movement; staff. Once a month we set aside a discussion to clarify our own thoughts and gain new input on the Worker.

April 28: Evangelization on a Mid-West Campus; Tom Cordaro. Tom is a campus minister at Iowa State University in Ames and is active in the charismatic renewal. *continued on p.15*

via pac

On Hospitality

by Jacquee Dickey

We have just survived a very hard two weeks. The house was packed (we had seven children) and we shared a round of the flu on Friday. Four-year-old Priscilla spent some time at Broadlawns hospital after hers developed into pneumonia. Betty got a very friendly welcome by this flu bug and is still battling off its side effects. That hasn't dampened Betty's presence. Since coming to our house as a staff person three weeks ago, Betty Goodenough has added much by her presence. Not only is she level-headed and gentle, she always makes sure the dish towels are hanging tidy in the kitchen! (After having men run our kitchen for one-and-a-half years, Betty's touch is very refreshing.) We welcome you in thanksgiving, Betty.

Our spring schedule looks very hectic as a lot of us plan to go to the demonstration at Rocky Flats, Colorado's nuclear defense plant. There is also a rally at the U.N. during the disarmament hearings in May on the calendar.

Not to mention our witness on tax day, April 17th. This arena of public outcry is a very important dimension of the worker. It's often the most criticized and misunderstood. It is very hard to see the broken and dispossessed come through our door and not make a broader connection. Last

continued on p.6
week, a mother and four children stayed with us. They were running away from her husband (their father) who tried to shoot them with a gun in a desperate attempt to communicate his anger. How should we deal with conflict? This man dealt with it with a gun. America proposes neutron bombs. Jesus dealt with it nonviolently, all the way to the cross.

Our society doesn't teach us how to solve conflicts without the use of physical or psychological violence. And when we see the victims of violence come to our House: the battered wives, abused children, or mothers and fathers who only know how to communicate with their children by screaming or criticizing them; when we see the potential violence of our learned behaviour, then we have to see that the arms stockpile is only a collective symbol for the violence in each of us. Conflict is solved by is solved by bullying or threatening. It's the same--whether it be the mother



Ade Bethune

"If I Do Not Wash Your Feet"

by Eve Kavanagh, RSCJ

Life at the Catholic Worker House brings into sharp relief an aspect of Christian ministry which I have never heard preached and rarely heard mentioned--it's mutuality. I have often been struck by the hard saying of Jesus to Peter in John 13:8, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." Peter, true to character, immediately consents to having his feet washed--plus! "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and head!" Then, in verse 14, Jesus commands the disciples to wash one another's feet. I am as good as anyone else at selective listening, and one of the phrases I am very good at "selecting out" of the gospel is that little phrase "one another's feet." I can, and have, washed feet to the point of exhaustion. However, when my feet need to be washed over and over again, my instinctive response is, "No, thank you very much, I'll wash my own feet!" But Jesus did not tell the disciples to "go and wash feet"; he told them to "wash one another's feet." His word has not changed. The commandment is to mutual ministry. At the Catholic Worker House I am becoming more aware of the vital importance of this aspect of Christian ministry.

I should have made it clear that I am not speaking about shared ministry. In the practical order

of daily life, shared ministry goes on here as it does anywhere. If I can't do the work, someone else can. If someone else can't do the job, given the time and ability, I'll do it. And so we keep going from day to day in spite of the tensions and crises which are part of communal living anywhere. Shared ministry is extremely important, and like any community, we couldn't manage without it. When I speak of mutual ministry I am thinking of something much more subtle, profound and, for me at least, much more demanding. Expressed most simply, it is the ability to receive the services and gifts of others with the same satisfaction and enthusiasm with which I dispense my own. I do not find this an easy task. My personal inclinations militate against it and, as far as I can see, so do all our cultural norms with their emphasis on independence, self-sufficiency and activism. Add to these norms the frequently quoted words of Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and the very human act of receiving appears to be eliminated from Christian life and ministry. I would suggest that this is true only when we take these words out of the context in which they were spoken, and make a whole of that which is merely a part.

It is indeed blessed to give

when I see a need to which I can respond. I am called to respond, to give. To say "yes" to this call is blessed. However, when the tables are turned and I am the one in need I am called to receive. To say "yes" to this call is blessed. When I say "no" to this call I am like Peter saying to Jesus, "You will never wash my feet."

At the Catholic Worker House we live with those to whom we minister, and so the tendency to say, "You will never wash my feet," takes quite a beating. Not only do we depend on people all over the city to supply us with material needs, but day after day we depend on our guests to help us fulfill our ministry of hospitality. The constant round of cooking, cleaning, washing dishes, preparing beds, etc., etc., would be overwhelming without their help.

However, the ministry of our guests goes beyond the help they give us around the house. In many of his Easy Essays, Peter Maurin calls those in need the "Ambassadors of God." They are indeed his "Ambassadors" and they do his work very well! They reveal us to ourselves, and in doing that they reveal God to us. So often they come to us wounded and broken, they leave us wounded and broken, and show us how wounded and broken we are ourselves. Sometimes they come wearing all the masks which society imposes upon us from birth and we see ourselves as if in a mirror. Sometimes they come to us no longer capable of wearing those masks and strip us

of our masks. The process is unending and frequently draining. But if we can live it in faith we learn not to take ourselves too seriously, not to depend on our own power, and not to be overcome by our own weakness and inadequacy. The work goes on, not because we are so committed and dedicated, but because our God is a faithful God and Jesus, the Suffering Servant, is Servant still in his glory. It is he who ministers to workers and guests alike and teaches us the invaluable truth of mutual need and mutual ministry.

For one reason or another, some people think, and tell us quite frankly, that (individually or as a group) we are quite crazy--or worse. Presumably an insult! For one reason or another, others think, and tell us quite frankly, that we are marvelous--the best thing in Des Moines, Iowa. Presumably a compliment! Neither the insult nor the compliment matters. Every now and then a visitor remarks, "I can't tell the workers from the guests." Usually I hear this remark whispered quietly in my ear and followed by an apology. Yet I think that if there is any sign that the work of the Lord Jesus is being done in us and through us and often in spite of us, this remark is the sign. It is the sign because it expresses the truth that there is no difference between the workers and the guests. In Christ Jesus we are all one--equally dependent on his mercy and compassion, and the healing, transforming power of his love.

Dying & Rising to the New Life

by J.S. Smith

If the tyranny of death in our present day "culture of death" is to be overcome in fact in our Christian lives; if death is to mark the ultimate liberation of the sons and daughters of God, it will be largely because of our Easter faith that Jesus Christ died and was raised up to new life. He was not restored to the life he had led. He was not brought back to a continuation of this life in space and time.

For Jesus, and for those who enter into the life of Jesus in their believing, death means a totally new relationship: to God as the ultimate reality. In death a new and eternal future is offered to man, to man--that is--in his wholeness and undividedness, as Hans Kung insists in On Being a Christian.

Resurrection means dying into God...resurrection occurs with death, in death, from death. Death is transition to God; is retreat into God's hiddenness; is assumption into his glory.

This ancient Easter faith is what most distinguishes us as Christians and, today, allows us to do what otherwise might appear impossible: overcome the temptation to give-up "living" here and now, in the face of an unprecedentedly popular escapism no longer healthy--even therapeutic--but only life-denying in its refusal to be human. "Be human," Thomas Merton urged in Raids on the Unspeakable, "in this

most inhuman of ages; guard the image of man for it is the image of God."

How ironic: that to live, today, we must know how to die, not fatalistically, but hopefully with great faith in the Jesus who has preceded us in death as well as in life--faith in the Jesus who has been raised up to new life.

ON HOSPITALITY

continued from p.2

who disciplines her child that way --or it be the government who protects its people that way. That's why when we offer food and shelter to the poor we also protest the injustices of our societal attitude of violence.

We have been so blessed during Lent by the generosity of folks. We have received food, toys, and household goods that we greatly needed. We are warmed by the thoughtfulness of the woman who wanted to give instead of receive on her birthday, and so we were graced with a box of food in her honor, or the children of a family in St. Mary's parish who after learning we needed toys, went through their things and shared with us some very fine, sturdy toys that were theirs. Holy Trinity parishioners have dutifully done our laundry each week and frequently cook us elegant suppers. To all the people that help and support us in our ministry may God Bless you with a meaningful Easter.

via pacis

Letter to the I.R.S.

Internal Revenue Service Center
Midwest Region
Kansas City, MO 64999

Dear Recipient:

If you read this letter before the IRS forms are automatically processed, please hold on to the official returns forms. They are a bit unusual.

I find it difficult to write this letter since I am naturally one who wants to please others. However, I have to respond in prophetic love and concern to my



Bob Pulley

March/April, 1978

adopted country on budgetary matters. As I fill out this year's form I am again aware that the United States of America puts a very high priority on military might and on war preparation. With 53% of the annual budget going to programs related to that area, it is quite obvious. As a Christian and one who holds in highest priorities caring for each other, I am in agreement with taxes which help people live together (political administration and organization), to live (welfare/social security/medical), and to relate in many other ways--parks, recreation, education, etc. However, perpetuating hate, killing "the enemy", and taking advantage of other countries because we want their resources does not at all fit into this vision.

Both as a Christian and as a member of the U.S. society I am responsible for my actions. Jesus' words in the Bible and the Nuremberg Trials agree on that matter. Therefore, I must take a hard look at my paying of the taxes which IRS indicates I owe.

According to the enclosed forms we owe \$--- total for 1977. Of that amount, \$--- has already been paid. If I pay the remainder, it gets used to support continuing military/fear build-up. I have written Congresspersons, Senators, IRS officers, and talked with

persons in all three of those categories. I have written U.S. Presidents. The U.S. Law still says I must pay for military/fear programs. HOWEVER, the Bible and my Christian faith tell me that I MAY NOT DO THAT. To do so would be to violate my deepest convictions, understandings, and commitments. God says to love; Jesus lived, taught, and continues to urge persons to do so. The Holy Spirit empowers believers to be compassionate. I cannot see how a member of the Kingdom of God can violate that ethical injunction and continue to live as Christian--at least I cannot.

Therefore, I must ask you to refund \$--- in tax money already collected. That, together with the \$--- I still "owe" IRS, comes to \$---, equalling 53% of my total 1977 tax bill. In order to assure you that my motives are not to KEEP the money for personal use, I am enclosing a check for the later amount, made out to the "Alternative Tax Fund" of Mennonite Central Committee. That is a fund established precisely for such occasions, so that it can be channelled to people-building programs. I have enclosed an envelope (stamped and addressed) to that agency and a letter to them with the check; please mail that letter after noting its contents.

I take such action with deep concern. I know it to be civil disobedience. However, I must obey God (the higher authority in my life) rather than government when the two come into conflict. I am aware of my liability

ties for such action. I pray God's grace and strength for what lies ahead--be it having my bank account "attached" (really, "broken into") for the amount desired by IRS, or be it more severe measures. I also pray God's grace and mercy on a nation that continues to condone and promote killing, promotes rape of land and peoples of many nations in the name of "progress", and calls its heroes those who are most valiant in war but as criminals those who work most sacrificially for peace.

I forward copies of this letter to the President of the United States, to my Senators, to my Congresspersons, to friends, and to persons in my denomination whom I serve as peer or as pastor.

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will bring us, individually and corporately, to repent of the great evil in which we participate and will renew us in "our rightful mind" so we can care and reach out and help each other grow, again

Yours for God's Justice,

Keith G. Schrag

February 28

Dear Mr. Schrag:

I am responding to your recent message to President Carter.

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us.

Sincerely,

Landon Kite

Staff Assistant

Keith Schrag is minister for Ames Mennonite Fellowship. He also represents Mennonites on the Iowa Peace Network Joint Oversight Committee.

When the dust blows over

by Ed Polich

(For the dozen or more
who left me. I'm still with you)

Some day, after I've had my say

They'll come along and lay me in the clay

10 feet under and I often wonder

Why we even try to live when we know we have to leave.
But there's no use to grieve or need an answer
to this puzzle friends. Every start will have to end.
I'll be there too when tomorrow's through.

In that plot of dirt, when the dust blows over.

For once, I'll rest one way or another.

And for the first time I'll enjoy being 10 feet under.

I might die cryin' from all the tryin'
to fake a smile or two like all the friends I knew
who lived till the end, when I would have died.
But there's not enough time to cry.

No use to even wonder why

I made it this far without even trying.

And I don't know why, I wasn't the one to die
So I'll keep singing my song

Under my own vine
till I find someone else's
that's better than mine.

I'll not try to die

But I might die tryin'

To live till the end

Like you my dead friends.

I tip my hat to all of you
for the last and only time.

Your dying taught me living

I'm with ya all the time.

Amen.

SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS and JAILS

by Frank Cordaro

Recently, I have been substitute teaching for the Des Moines Public school system. It's a good part-time job that I can do whenever I want with no future commitment. But the experience has reawakened in me some very real connections between some not so related institutions: jails, schools and hospitals.

I first became aware of these institutional connections while I was serving a 30 day jail sentence in D.C. for civil disobedience last summer. The tip-off for me was when I discovered that anyone who had served time in Catholic schools, grades one through twelve, has the basic tools for making it in a jail system. Bells structure your life, the correct count sets the tempo and the free person tries to beat the system.

This really struck me again this past week while I was substitute teaching. All substitute teachers are expected to stay at school the whole school day. The teacher that I was substituting for had a planning period the last hour of the day. I saw no need for me to stay the extra hour, so I proceeded to the Registrar to get my form signed for an early dismissal. She said she could not release me early unless I got permission from the

vice-principal. I went to his office where I waited 45 minutes until he would see me. He then informed me that a substitute teacher in his school stays at the school until the end of the day, and that if I couldn't find anything to do, he would assign me a hallway I could patrol. It became clear to me again what schools are all about, what jails are all about, what hospitals are all about, and what they have in common.

Alienation is a direct outcome of putting people in jails, schools and hospitals. In each setting, the person's first impression is one of repulsion. A strong sense of unnaturalness comes with each first day experience in the system; it is a major culture shock. Although a person learns to adjust to survive, they never lose the sense that they are in an unnatural environment. The survival defenses create in persons inner tensions and spiritual crises that go against the human make-up. In schools you are programmed to excel and compete. In jails you are programmed to "get tough" and take care of number one. In hospitals your very person is separated from your body, which is only an object with a disfunctioning part. In all three institutions you are made to feel uncomfortable about

Children are protected by neither the First nor the Fifth Amendment when they stand before the secular priest, the teacher. The child must confront a man who wears an invisible triple crown, like the papal tiara, the symbol of triple authority combined in one person. For the child, the teacher pontificates as pastor, prophet, and priest—he is at once guide, teacher and administrator of a sacred ritual. He combines the claims of medieval popes in a society constituted under the guarantee that these claims shall never be exercised together by one established and obligatory institution—church or state.

Deschooling Society, Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1971.

Ivan Illich

liberating functions, but in reality backing the status-quo.

All three institutions ingrain in the individual a high level of conformity. In each a person must accept a certain world perspective with no other options. At the completion of their stay they usually re-enter the larger society less free than when they entered. Schools are the largest conformers we have in society. In schools, a person's natural creativity is quickly drummed out of him. Its basic orientation is to meet the needs of average students with a high price paid for anyone who wants to be different. Students who see the real injustices in the society and wish to work for change are quickly absorbed into the many mazes of "the chicken and the egg" bureaucracies set up to be those supposed change agents, but in reality are the greatest hinderance to real social change. The best example of this is the whole welfare system. Also, the institutional Church plays a big part as an institution professing a

With any chance for change dissolved, the main thrust of schools is to keep the wheels of the system manned by the necessary quota of bodies formed into their desired molds of doctor, lawyer and businessman. Jails are also big in conformity. All people are given a number, dress the same, are treated the same (although this has never been so, as long as you are dealing with human beings). The theory is if you are all made equal, every person has the same chance for reform. The exact opposite works: jails make you worse at what you were before you were jailed. If you entered a drug user, you may come out a pusher. If you went in a petty thief, you may come out an armed robber.

Hospitals are perhaps the most subtle of the three institutions, yet their type of conformity is most persuasive. In hospitals, a person is given no other option for medical care than what is

narrowly offered: care based on the knife or chemical treatment with a high priority towards specialization and centralized control. Their ultimate threat is "your life is at stake." Doctors are gods on earth, whose word is final. What mere person would doubt them(only see how many opinions god has--one for every doctor)? They hold life and death in their hands. To conform is the only option you have.

All three institutions wean a person to a dependency for the institution. Most people in jail will be back in jail once they get out. The whole thrust of education is to excel and progress up the educational ladder: high school to college to masters to Ph.D. to teacher. And hospitals often cure one area of the body, only to have the person hospitalized for the cure. Once you have committed yourself to their type of care, you are made dependant on them--chemical dependency.

Jails, schools and hospitals are crucial economic systems in their own right, and extremely important for our whole economic well being. A high proportion of prisoners are young black males. This is no accident. The hardest group to keep employed is young black males. Every new jail built will give the existing administration more power in determining who they want off the streets. Also, while I was in D.C., I was constantly reminded that I was costing the government \$1,400 for my one month stay. I was more

of a consumer while I was in jail than I am now as a free man. The more jails we build, the more jobs we create: it's good business. If schools are looked upon as a form of employment, then the combined number of people employed by our school systems (students, teachers, administrators, etc.) is well over 80 million strong. The single largest employer by far in the country must be the school system. Not only do they train people for the systems needed "cogs," but they also serve as a buffer in keeping people out of the job market. Lastbut not least , the total U.S. hospital budget was nearly \$180 billion in 1977, just behind the yearly expense of the total U.S. military budget. A point that must also be remembered is that all three, jails, schools and hospitals, are subsidised in part or in full by federal, state or local governments, bringing with them all the expensive troubles and limitations of big government controls.

Finally, the most perverse commonality of all three institutions is that they carry a life of their own, devoid of any individual person or person's control. They control us, we don't control them. The truth of this can be easily proven. Simply go to a place where ordinary people gather. Ask them a few simple questions: "What did you learn in school?" "Do jails reform people to become good citizens?" "Are hospitals the places to go if you are sick?" I bet you will discover that most people will admit that schools

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Passing Over / Letting Go

(a year old Lenten meditation)

by Steve Marsden

Trilateral imperialism holds millions of this world's people in bondage surely as did Pharaoh enslave the Hebrew people in the days of Moses. Seeking to maximize global corporate profit, giant multinational corporations squeeze the wealth from the life of the people. They will not let go.

The refusal of Pharaoh to let the people go brought numerous HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, JAILS continued from p. 12 don't educate, jails don't reform, and hospitals don't cure. Yet, to suggest that we do anything different, people call you crazy or mad. That is the power of evil: to fool people into believing in systems that are obviously not doing what they say they are doing.

If you spend any time at all in any of the three institutions, the similarities of physical plants might strike you as strange. In times of crisis, all three facilities are easily transferable: a hospital into a jail, a jail into a school, a school into a hospital. Perhaps, many years from now an anthropologist may dig up the remains of these three institutions and may come to the same conclusions I have come up with in writing this article: that, in their essence, jails, schools and hospitals serve very similar purposes as maintaining and controlling centers for the larger society.

plagues upon the land. Corporate greed holds much of the planet in its grip. The result is untold suffering--poverty, starvation, malnutrition--for millions of people. Poisons fouling the air and water and ever increasing radioactive hazards are afflictions which plague every living soul.

The mad pursuit of maximum profitability hold each of us in its clutches, at least to some extent. Our afflictions are upon us. They hold us down and they will not let us go. Among our companions some are locked in cages, others are blown out of the sky, and still other have had their magical musical fingers severed from their hands amid taunts and jeers.

The root of greed is fear. Each of us has a fear which is an obstacle to our own liberation and which cripples us in our attempts to participate in the struggles against the domination of the planet by corporate power.

Within each of us there is something grasping and clutching that will not let go. Within each of us there is something which craves the meagre rewards and precarious security that comes from selling our soul to corporate power.

We must work to overcome our fear. We must learn to let go of our individualistic selfishness and join with our sisters and brothers in the struggle for liberation which is the source of all true joy.

Letter to High School Seniors

Feb. 24, 1978

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

For those of you preparing to graduate, whether in a few months or in a few years, there comes a time when one must plan his or her future. College, work or perhaps you've thought about the armed services after reviewing the material they have bombarded or will bombard you with.

While attending Heelan High School a few years ago, I also found myself in that position. After attending Loras and Briar Cliff colleges, and without thoroughly analyzing my action, I enlisted as a German language-trained translator-interpreter. However, I presently being evaluated for conscientious objector status.

You must remember recruiters are salesmen (bounty hunters, if you prefer) selling a very different product. Consider the large sums spent on advertising.

They tell you it's only a job or it's more than a job, it's an adventure. It is more than a job. Where else can you be forced to traverse the far ends of the earth to shoot others (or to be shot at)? How about getting called to a college campus or factory to put down an insurrection? You may forcibly put down one of your ex-classmates.

What other occupation so conflicts with Christ's teaching of loving our neighbor as ourself? A great boost of immorality, the neutron bomb, kills people but leaves the structures they built standing. Instead of funding pro-life projects, such as alleviating hunger, poverty, unemployment or supporting educational, environmental and medical research, the government funds you as a member of the military-industrial complex, caught up in an arms race that nobody can win.

Sacrifice your individuality. Be told when to get haircuts, to make your bed, shine your boots and clean your room. Saturday morning room inspections are always delightful. Be completely under those above you in the chain of command. It is really signing your life away for three or four years. If you're dissatisfied, too bad. You can't quit, but if you enjoy harassment you may find yourself a home.

Jobs. What kind of job does joining the infantry, armor, artillery and many other service occupations prepare you for? Also one receives job training guaranteed, not a job. In my case, the job only existed on paper and I was trained as a voice intercept operator, not a translator-interpreter as my contract specified. Some others

DISCUSSIONS, from p.2

May 5: Eucharist as Bread for the Hungry; Tad Guzie, S.J. Tad, of the St. Joseph Educational Center staff, is a well published author on sacraments and the Church.

were guaranteed the job, but also trained as voice interceptors. A class action suit was filed in California but the forthcoming decision seems to keep getting pushed back.

Travel. My whole class had orders for Ft. Hood and I've been here since October, 1976. Less than conducive for keeping up the



skill I was to have learned.

Education. You can attend school while in the service but if there's a field exercise or duty to perform, guess which takes precedence.

While I was in Basic Training, three drill sergeants had us pray for war until I complained to the right individual. These and a few other fellow "humanitarians" also hit trainees for punishment and what sometimes seemed to be personal pleasure. Hopefully these acts don't continue, and I'm sure

May 26: A Night with Msgr. McIlhon; Past visits by Msgr. McIlhon have been educational and entertaining, ranging in scope from catachism to rag-time piano. Expect more of the same.

only a small minority participated, but they were very real a short time ago.

If you do go to a recruiter, bring a parent or tape recorder or both to have proof of promises made to you that the recruiter may "forget." Know exactly what you are getting. The man has to meet a quota, what you enlist for is usually pretty immaterial. Let ex-servicemen, a lawyer or parents closely scrutinize your contract before signing.

Contemplate on the message of love Jesus taught and lived and these words contained in Pacem in Terris:

Therefore in an age such as ours which prides itself on its atomic energy it is contrary to reason to hold that war is a suitable way to restore rights which have been violated.

I can't encourage you enough to really think about what you are planning to do. Three to four years on a no-quit contract is a long time.

If you wish any information on the Peace/War issue with a Catholic viewpoint, I suggest writing:

Catholic Peace Fellowship
339 Lafayette St.
New York, NY 10012
Peace,
Robert S. Renfro
A 522 C.E.W.I. Bu.
Ft. Hood, TX 76546

Poverty

by Edson Howarth

I would like to pose a question to all of us: what is poverty? I am sure we will all come up with many different answers. I have been asking this question for the last few months. I would like to share several of my answers with you.

Last week I drove through the River River Bottoms. We all know what they are. The people who live there experience a real kind of poverty. As I drove through there I could not but help noticing the capital dome. God, that must have cost a couple of million dollars. If so why do the river bottoms exist the way they do? Where are our priorities? Are they people or buildings? I believe that the capital dome is a symbol. A symbol of what we as a society have become. We have preferred pretty buildings to healthy people. Because of this I say we have mentally aborted these people to lose their bowels in ice filled outhouses. I say we have lost a great asset and that is our humanity! We as a people have prostituted ourselves into a system that has depersonalized us to the point where we are no longer to blame. After all "we can't fight city hall" can we?

If those river bottoms are ever to be cleaned up we must first deal with our attitudes. To me

it is obvious that the city, state and federal government cannot live the corporal acts of mercy. That is our privilege as the body of Christ on earth. If all of us would just clean the inside of the cup then by nature the outside of the cup would clean itself up. Nature is funny that way.

I pose another question to us. What must our response be to this poverty. In the Gospel of Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus seems to say that we must first act out of a gospel of deeds. Feed the hungry; clothe the naked; visit the lonely. Minister to survival needs. What you do to them you do to me.

In the miracle of the loaves, Jesus first feeds hungry people, then tells them of the bread of life. In the miracle of the wine at Cana, Jesus first alleviates the pain of human embarrassment and then goes on to preach about the need of the surrender to the cross. Jesus seems to be interested in basic human needs-- nourishing food and a warm house. If this is so, why aren't we?

I believe that a big part of the problem is that our society is built on a work gain system. It teaches us that we must pull ourselves up from the bootstraps and take care of number one; after all no one else will. The contradiction is we are supposed to be Christian. When the world sees us they are

supposed to say: "see how they love one another." Jesus says to those who have enough food, you must fast; to those with closets filled with clothes, you must give up your anxiety about suits and pant suits. You must travel light if you want to witness to the gospel. Jesus does not say give up your suits; however you better give up your anxiety about them. Jesus does not say everyone must be poor, but you better be good stewards of what you have. What we have is a gift from God to be distributed to the people of the world. If we do not give we are merely keeping what is not ours. It is no wonder that the United States with six percent of the worlds goods consumes sixty percent of the worlds goods.

A Christian is called to live within the tension of a society that is contradictory to itself. This tension is necessary for the church. We are to become so possessed by the Lord and the Kingdom that we become keenly aware of this tension. We must be very careful not to compromise ourselves for our society.

This tension is felt most powerfully in me when I see and feel the cry of the poor. I understand poverty only in part. I grew up in an upper middle class home. We lived in the richest parish in the city. I never really knew what poverty was. I do not regret my upbringing. I have been touched

by the Crucified Christ in the poor and I have changed. I have grown. I don't look at poverty as a negative thing. It is how we as church deal with it that makes it positive or negative.

We must look carefully at our motives; yet at the same time we must be cautious. Too much searching can conceal the truth. Are we really poor in Spirit? Are we merely trying to build a society of equality so that we do not have to feel the tension? Finally, are we coming from our own egos. St. Augustine said love and do what you must!

The prerequisite to live all of the beatitudes is to be poor in Spirit. To me poverty of the Spirit is to be accepting, accepting of all the people and circumstances that enter our lives and our hearts. To see people as a we, not a them. It means to see people as a gift to be received, not possessed. Finally and not least it means to be content on being and not having.

So if we as church wish to confront the pain of the poor, we must first deal with our own inner poverty, and if we really deal with this we will by nature be drawn to the poor. Phillip Berrigan states that the prophets tell us who we should be and the poor tell us who we are. As I close I would like to pray that it is within the poor that we are given the privilege of seeing the risen Lord.

ISAIAH HOUSE

by Jacquee Dickey

Isaiah accepted his call to prophecy at a very critical time in Israel's history. "The enormous abyss between God's sovereign holiness and man's sin overwhelmed (him)..." (New American Bible) So Isaiah became a critic of the sinfulness of the times so that he could point to the holiness of the Kingdom of God. And that took some hard reality. Isaiah was no soft-touch. He must not have been too worried about hurting people's feeling or chastising the sinners with tact. The words of a prophet sting by nature because the truth is often very hard to face in ourselves. So Isaiah's job description probably warned him that lots of folks would think he was a kook. Nevertheless, moved by the truth of the Spirit and his willingness to serve, Isaiah set down a pretty hard critique of his homeland. "Jerusalem is crumbling, Judah is falling; for their speech and their deeds are before the Lord, a provocation in the sight of his majesty. Their very look bears witness against them; their sin like Sodom they vaunt, they hide it not. Woe to them! They deal out evil to themselves. Happy the just, for it will be well with them, the fruit of their works they will eat. Woe to the wicked man! All goes ill with the work of his hands,



Catherine Dolan

he will be repaid...O my people your leaders mislead, they destroy the paths you should follow."
(Isaiah 3:8-12)

Today in America in 1978, Isaiah's prophecies are still relevant. Today's prophets in the church who point to the Kingdom are saying we must turn away from our nationalist greed and exploitation. We must stop the suicidal course of the arms race and we must work for justice and pray that "thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven." It's still pretty hard reality to face--just as it must have been in Isaiah's time. Answering the call to justice may challenge us to reevaluate our way of life in America. In searching out Yahweh's call to justice there are no easy answers--and a lot of hard questions.

An ecumenical group of us in

Des Moines have been sharing our struggle in this matter for several years, and out of it Isaiah House was born.

We purchased a house located at 1521 Sixth Avenue and have it almost renovated for full use. The downstairs will house the Center for Urban Encounter (CUE) and Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI). These groups are involved in the helping-people-help-themselves of community organizing. For the last two years they have empowered neighborhood people in Des Moines to work on issues affecting their lives unjustly.

Rev. Bob Cook of Cottage Grove Presbyterian Church is the director of CUE, and our own Joe DaVia, with the help of Leslie Anderson and Paul Battle work out of Isaiah House for CCI.

Upstairs, the Des Moines Area Justice and Peace Center is located. John Smith has recently joined us to be executive director of the Center. John (commonly referred to as "Jack") is from Davenport, Iowa and was formerly a professor at St. Ambrose College (over 20 years worth of effort there). He resigned in protest when the ROTC was reinstated on campus. Jack, who has a PhD in history, is also working on a book that documents the role of nonviolence throughout American history.

The specific concerns of women for non-violence will also be addressed at Isaiah House. A women's resource and awareness center is also being established upstairs.

Jacquee Dickey, of the Catholic Worker House, plans to work with Jack at the Center. The Center has a library of over 2,000 books on nonviolence. Plans are being made to offer workshops and training seminars on issues of justice and peace. The Center will provide education/action alternatives that help us grapple with the hard questions of the call of the Kingdom of God.

The funds for Isaiah House are coming from others that support our work. We wish to operate on a simple budget, but we do need help. There is still maintenance work that needs to be done on the House. We need money for operational costs and stipend salaries for the workers. We could use any volunteers for readying the House as well as money. You can send donations in care of Jacquee Dickey at the Catholic Worker House (earmarked "for Isaiah House").

We're available to talk to you more about our House. If you're interested,, let us know. Join us in saying "yes" to this ministry. "Here I am Lord, send me!"

Des Moines Catholic Worker
P.O. Box 4551
Des Moines, IA 50306
Tel. (515) 253-0765

Catholic Worker House
713 Indiana

Msgr Ligutti House of Hospitality
1301 8th Street

Holy Week

by Dorothy Day

During Holy Week, we celebrated the Last Supper, setting the long tables in the refectory with unleavened bread and wine, bitter herbs and wild garlic with a dressing in a big dish in the middle of the table, and we tried to get lamb to roast, but could not, so we took what was said to be beef instead. There were about fifteen of us from the farm at the table, and there was just a morsel of meat each, just enough to give us an idea of what the Passover feast was like. Next year we shall have a roast lamb, we hope from the farm itself. During the meal we read the story of the Last Supper.

PEACEMAKER ORIENTATION PROGRAM IN NONVIOLENCE

July 21-August 4, 1978
CatholicWorker House of Hospitality
243 Bay Drive, Sacramento, CA 95815

This orientation program will focus on learning about non-violence through sharing physical labor. We hope to develop skills in community and consensus by joining in the work and repair of the hospitality house. Along with the work there will be music, dancing, and discussions on non-violence.

Cost: \$3 per day. For more information, and to register, write:
Peggy Beingard, P.O. Box 4793,
Arcata, CA 95521 (707) 822-1204.

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